

U.S./Mexico Border 2012 Program: Funds Solicitation

Catalog of Federal Domestic (CFDA) Number: 66.931

Purpose

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Regions 6 and 9, are soliciting grant and cooperative agreement proposals for projects in the California/Baja California, Arizona/Sonora, Chihuahua-New Mexico-Texas, and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo León-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup areas that address the objectives of the U.S.-Mexico Border 2012 Program. The U.S.-Mexico Border 2012 Program is a binational collaborative effort whose mission is to protect the environment and public health in the U.S.-Mexico border region (100 kilometers either side of the U.S.-Mexico border) consistent with the principles of sustainable development. (For more information on the Border 2012 Program please visit our Web site at: www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder).

The goals of the Border 2012 Program are to:

- reduce water pollution,
- reduce air pollution;
- reduce land contamination
- improve environmental health;
- reduce exposure to chemicals as a result of accidental chemical releases and/or acts of terrorism;
- improve environmental performance through compliance, enforcement, pollution prevention and promotion of environmental stewardship.

Available Funds

Total program funding available for this program is an estimated **\$1.2 million**. Individual awards will not exceed two tiers of funding: Tier 1 - Up to \$30,000 and Tier 2 - \$30,001-\$100,000. We anticipate that a limited number of Tier 2 projects will be funded. Multi-year (2-3 year) Tier 1 and Tier 2 proposals will be accepted.

Pre-award Costs: Pre-award will be reimbursed.

Cost Share/Recipient Match: The proposal must specify that there will be at least a 5 per cent match for grants/cooperative agreements, including in-kind contributions. Funding from other federal grants may not be used to meet this match requirement.

Eligibility

Organizations that are eligible to apply are limited to those located in the United States that are:

- border states,
- multistate/tribal organizations,
- universities,
- local governments, and
- non-governmental organizations.

These entities are encouraged to partner with relevant Mexican border organizations

Organizations may submit multiple proposals. EPA and Regional Workgroup co-chairs will be involved in the solicitation, rating and ranking of project proposals on a competitive basis. Applicants must demonstrate that a proposed project can commence within a 3-6 months of award.

Eligibility Criteria

- Proposals must be from an eligible organization.
- Proposed projects must address a bi-national or transboundary issue and meet the goals/objectives of Border 2012. **At least one environmental education grant will be awarded in the California/Baja California region; and at least one environmental education grant will be awarded in the Arizona/Sonora region.**
- Proposals must be submitted on time.
- Projects must be able to start within 3-6 months of award.

Applicants must identify the environmental statute the project will address. Projects must fall within one of the below environmental statutes:

- Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3): conduct and promote research investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution.
- Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442(b)(3): develop, expand, or carry out a program (that may combine training, education, and employment) for occupations relating to the public health aspects of providing safe drinking water.
- Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001(a): conduct and promote the coordination of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, public education programs and studies relating to solid waste.
- Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3): conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution.
- Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10(a): conduct research, development of monitoring activities on toxic substances.
- Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act, Section 311(a): conduct basic research and training related to the detection, assessment, and evaluation of the risks and human effects of exposure to hazardous substances.

Activities not Eligible for Funding:

Ineligible costs are outlined in 40 CFR Parts 30 & 31, including construction and in OMB Circulars A-21 (Educational Institutions), A-87 (Governments), and A-122 (Non-profit Organizations).

Proposal/Workplan Guidelines - Format and Content

Step 1 - Communicate with EPA (OPTIONAL): We encourage you to contact us to discuss your ideas before submitting a pre-proposal. For this solicitation please contact Gary Wolinsky, EPA Region 9, at (415) 972-3498 or Linda Falk, EPA Region 6, at (214) 665-8535. The purpose of this step is to ensure that your project idea meets the application eligibility requirements. It also provides an opportunity to address questions regarding this funding program and eligible costs or activities prior to the submission of the pre-proposal.

Step 2 - Pre-Proposal: If your project is eligible, you may submit a two page "pre-proposal" postmarked by 12 midnight on **December 31, 2003**. The pre-proposal should provide EPA with a profile of the applicant, the purpose of your project, a brief explanation of how you plan to accomplish your project, and an estimate of the time and money needed to complete your project (see format below). During the review of the pre-proposals, EPA may request clarification on submitted information. Pre-proposals that are inconsistent with program goals or that contain ineligible costs and activities will be screened out of the review process, but may be referred to other EPA funding programs if appropriate.

Pre-Proposal Format -- 2 page limit (i.e., front and back of one page)

1. Applicant's name, primary contacts, address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail (if available).
2. Background information about lead organization, and other participants/partners.
3. Summary of the project.
4. Project goals and objectives:
 - What you will achieve?
 - What the project impact will be?
 - Whom the project will benefit?
 - How you plan to determine the project's effectiveness?
 - How will project results be measured and how will that relate to environmental improvements?
5. Project time-line (provide an overall schedule, lasting no more than 18 months).
6. Estimated project budget (show estimates for personnel, travel, supplies, etc.).

Pre-Proposals for California/Baja California and Arizona/Sonora Regional Workgroup areas must be post-marked by 12 midnight (PST) on **December 31, 2003** (NO fax or e-mail submissions) to:

Gary Wolinsky
Region 9 Border 2012 Proposals
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-4)
San Francisco, CA 94105

Pre-Proposals for Chihuahua-New Mexico-Texas and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo León-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroups must be post-marked by 12 midnight (CST) on **December 31, 2003** (NO fax or e-mail submissions) to:

Linda Falk
Region 6 Border 2012 Proposals
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Ave, Suite 1200 (6PD)
Dallas, Texas 75202

Step 3 - EPA Notifies Finalists: After the pre-proposals are ranked by EPA, we will notify finalists by **February 17, 2004**, to prepare a full proposal. At this time, EPA will provide finalists with a format for the full proposal. This will include a workplan of less than 5 pages, budget, and letters of commitment from project partners, if applicable.

Step 4 - Full Proposal: Finalists must submit a full proposal no later than **March 5, 2004**.

Step 5 - Final selections: EPA will review the full proposals and make final selections by **April 1, 2004**. Applicants chosen for funding will be asked to negotiate a final workplan with EPA and to complete a federal application for assistance. Please note that if your proposal is selected that does not constitute an award.

Proposal Review and Ranking Process

Projects will be evaluated and funding recommendation made for the highest ranked projects by EPA and counter-part co-chairs using the following criteria (100 Points total):

1. Project Description (25 points)
 - Does the proposal incorporate the use of Border 2012 tools?
 - Does the proposal present a clear description of priority environmental problems or issues which the project will address?
 - Are the goals and tasks clear and concise? Are the tasks budget, timeline etc. realistic?
 - Does the applicant demonstrate that the proposed project can commence within 3-6 months?

2. Project Objective/Goals (25points)

- How well does the proposal contribute to achieving one or more of the objectives listed in the Border 2012 framework?
- Does the proposal specify realistic goals and objectives that deal with the environmental problems or issues identified?

3. Project Benefits (25 points)

- Does the proposal include a well-conceived strategy to achieve those goals and objectives?
- Does the project take a creative, innovative approach and/or implement successful models from other areas?
- Does the project's scope and budget make effective and judicious use of the requested federal grant funds? Does it leverage other public or private resources, including in-kind contributions?
- Will the project deliverables be transferable or useful to others?
- Are project participants well qualified to conduct the proposed project and have a demonstrated record of success in their previous work in the border region and/or related areas?

4. Measurability of Project Results (15 points)

- Does the project contain clear measures of success?
- Measures of success should be either measures of environmental improvement, or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability in the following areas:
 - Will the project lead to measurable environmental improvements?
 - How/when will measurable products and results be available?
 - How does the project impact public perception and behavior to achieve beneficial environmental results?

For additional information please see our Project Measurement Fact Sheet

5. Border 2012 Task Force Endorsed Projects (10 points – provided that other criteria are met)

Selection

Final selection of projects will be made by Laura Yoshii, Deputy Regional Administrator, EPA Region 9 and Larry Starfield, Deputy Regional Administrator, EPA Region 6. Selected organizations will be notified and requested to submit a full project proposal. Non-selected applicants will be notified in writing.

Disputes: Any disputes will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR Part 31, subpart F.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

Application Forms

Proposals that are selected for continuance in the process will be sent an application kit for funding along with a guidance letter. These recipients will be invited to submit a detailed workplan and the completed application for funding. No funding will occur if deadlines are missed or prior to the EPA Project Officer approving the workplan.

Applicable Regulations

Applicable Regulations and Circulars

States and local governments: 40 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part 31

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/40cfr31_02.html

Tribal Governments will follow Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a087/a087-all.html>

Institutions of Higher Education and Non-Profits: 40 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part 30

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/40cfr30_02.html

Confidentiality

Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency Regulations at 40 CFR. Part 2, Subpart B

Use Restrictions

Assistance will be targeted to applicants which have demonstrated capability to successfully carry out Federal grant programs.

Reporting Requirements

Quarterly project status reports and a final Financial Status Report will be required. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide EPA with information about project development. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for all federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

Written semi-annual reports/results shall be submitted to EPA/SEMARNAT for posting on the Internet (BECCnet Web page) and for publication in the Regional Workgroup newsletter.

Intergovernmental Review

Applicants must meet the requirements of Executive Order 12372. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

Timeline

- 12/31/03 -- Deadline for submitting project pre- proposals
- 02/17/04 -- EPA completes project selection process and notifies recipients to submit full proposal
- 03/05/04 -- Applicant to submit any additional information required by EPA, Financial Spreadsheet, workplan, and grant application for direct grants
- 04/01/04 -- EPA awards funds for all projects